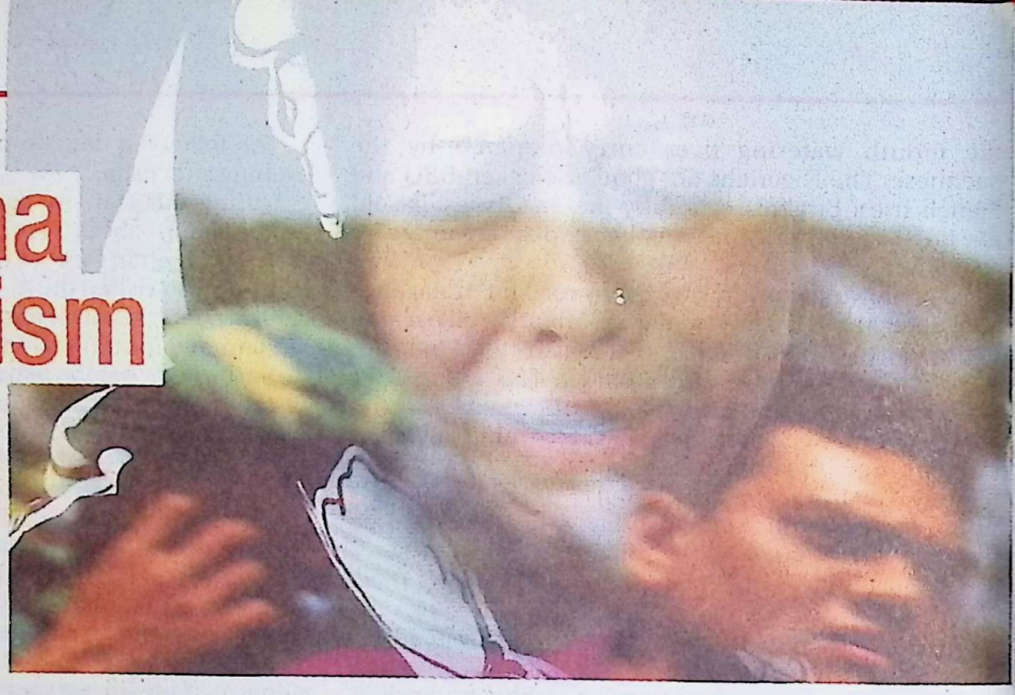
Pilkhana Barbarism



I came out of the shop after buying a few groceries for my mother near Pilkhana, when suddenly I came face to face with a 'war' going on outside on the streets. People in uniforms were running around on the streets, shooing away the general people from the middle of the road and screaming at them to keep away. The BDR soldiers were shooting from the BDR area. It was extremely scary and for a moment I did not know where I was. Suddenly, a student of about 21 years of age got shot and fell down on the ground with a thud. He was shot right in the ear. The shooting went on and no one could run to the spot and get the boy. Finally after more than an hour, a group of young boys, most probably the student's friends ran through the showering bullets and grabbed his body and brought him back to the safe place where everyone was huddled. The boys burst into tears, realising that their friend was dead. All of them got in an army vehicle and drove off to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH). Later on, bodies of the officials were brought out of the ditches, almost decomposed. The barbarism that happened last week will be imprinted in our memories forever.

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THE HORRORS

I went to Dhaka on February 25, to participate in the BDF National Debate Festival '09 at Shishu Academy. Before the event had begun, I, along with two friends, went to Nilkhet looking for a cyber café. At around 10 or 11 am, we heard the sound of machine games. We were scared, did not know what was happening. It was right out of a movie. The horror filled experience can never be erased from my memory. No sooner had we heard the sound of bullets, we fell to the ground. The panic spread soon and it drove the local people into frenzy. Finally, we escaped from the danger zone. We ran though the Dhaka University campus and reached the Shishu Academy. In spite of the horrors, which took place in Dhaka, the debaters remained in the city till the event came to its conclusion. By then the barbarism of a certain group of people surfaced and shocked the people of the country. That night, I left Dhaka with a broken heart, praying for the departed souls and their grieving families.

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Changing Thyself

The other day as I was making my way back home after finishing my *maghrib* prayer, I was confronted with a rather appalling experience that left me awestruck. I was stunned as I saw a girl in her mid-twenties, scolding and humiliating an old man. The poor old security guard who worked in her house stood there rigid and helpless. The girl was infuriated and was screaming at him throwing all kinds of offensive words in English. I couldn't help myself but dread the pathetic condition of the oppressed in the so-called democratically civilised country that we live in and the rampant discrimination between the diverse segments of society that tend to annihilate our future aspirations of constructing a developed and changed Bangladesh. It seems that education is making but little difference in terms of making us compassionate and having respect towards our fellow humans. Hence to change the world, we have to change and alter ourselves first.

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